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A Study of Town-Country Relationships

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C. R. HOFFER

INTRODUCTION

Community organization is a comprehensive term. It includes many phases of social activity, ranging from the simplest forms of mutual aid to the most complex types of human relationships. The essential fact about a community is common interests, and the essential fact about community organization is organized effort on the part of those persons concerned to develop their common interests.

One significant phase of rural community organization is the relationship between town and country. Every farm is linked up in one way or another with a trade center, and most rural trade centers depend upon the surrounding farms for a large part of their support. This relationship is common and easily observed. The deeper implications of it are not so obvious, though they need to be understood and evaluated. Only when the facts of town-country relationships are made clear, can there be a basis for whole-hearted cooperation and constructive organization on the part of town and country groups.

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine certain town-country relationships from the standpoint of their effect on community organization. The problem of the rural town is to find out how it can best serve the people who patronize it. It is quite obvious that all towns cannot offer all kinds of services. Trade centers vary in size from small hamlets to large metropolitan cities, each offering its quota of goods and services. If a town tries to offer a serivce when there are not enough people to support it, confusion and disappointment are likely to result. On the other hand, it is desirable to have an adequate variety of goods and services within easy access of rural people.

It seems advisable, therefore, to consider the types of services which trade centers of various sizes offer. If the relationship between the size of a trade center and the types of service which it offers can be ascertained, such information would show at once the difficulty and impossibility, perhaps, of having a type of service in a town when the town is too small to support it. It would also suggest a query regarding the size of center which would be necessary in order to have the principal kinds of services that rural people demand.

[1]This study was carried on cooperatively by the Department of Sociology, Michigan State College, and the Division of Farm Population and Rural Life, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Department of Agriculture.

A second point to be investigated is the trading habits of the farmer. If he lives near a small town that lacks certain types of service, how is this inadequacy on the part of the town met? Does the farmer go to a larger town? If so, does the second town to which he goes supply him with all types of services or does the farmer adopt the practice of patronizing several trade centers? If he follows the latter practice, how does it affect his loyalty to the nearby trade center and its social institutions? Answers to these questions will aid in clarifying our knowledge about town-country relationships.

A third objective of this study is to consider the methods of encouraging cooperation between town and country groups in matters that are of common interest to them. Ordinarily, community development cannot be achieved readily by one group working in a single-handed manner. It is realized most easily when the principal groups in a community work together for a common purpose. Therefore the value of methods which will encourage harmony between these two important groups is evident.

SIZE OF TOWN AND TYPE OF MERCHANDISING SERVICE OFFERED

In order to investigate the relationship between the size of town and the types of merchandising services that it offers, a majority of the incorporated towns in Michigan having a population of less than 5,000 were grouped according to their population.[2] Towns of less than 500 in population were put in one group, those having a population 501-1,000 were put in another, and so on until the upper limit of 5,000 was reached. Then, after the towns were so classified, an actual count was made to determine what percentage in the various population groups had one or more of the following types of stores: drug store, furniture store, general store, grocery store, hardware store, jewelry store, men's clothing store, women's clothing store, dry goods store, variety store, and millinery store.[3] The percentage of towns of each population group having these types of stores is given in Table I.

Seventy-eight per cent of the towns in the 1-500 population group have a drug store. So, it seems logical to conclude that many towns of this size can support this type of store. Roughly speaking, four out of five do. In a limited way, other types of stores in a small trade center may supply some of the services offered by a drug store but they cannot do this for all its services. Furniture stores do not exist to any considerable extent in the towns having a population of less than 1,000. Towns larger than this usually have furniture stores, unless they are located near a still larger town that

[2]The figures for the 1920 census were used to determine the population of the town. All incorporated towns listed in the census were used except those which were definitely known to be suburbs of a larger town or city.

[3]The information regarding the number of towns in any population group that had the types of stores designated was secured from the "Michigan Gazetteer" published by R. L. Polk & Company. This Gazetteer is a commercial directory published in 1927. It gives the number of different types of stores in each town in the state classified by types. The classification of stores used in this study corresponds substantially to the classification in the directory. The only exception to this procedure is a change in the name of variety stores and women's clothing stores. These stores are designated in the directory as, "Notions," and "Ladies' Furnishings," respectively.

Table I—Percentage of Towns in Different Population Groups which have Various Types of Stores.

Population group	No. of towns in group	Type of store: Drug	Dry goods	Furniture	General	Grocery	Hardware	Jewelry	Men's clothing	Millinery	Shoes	Variety	Women's clothing
		Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.
4,501-5,000	5	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	60. 0	40.0
4,001-4,500	6	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	83.3	16.7
3,501-4,000	5	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	60.0	20.0
3,001-3,500	6	100.0	100.0	100.0	50.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	16.7
2,501-3,000	8	100.0	100.0	100.0	75.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	87.5	87.5	100.0	100.0	12.5
2,001-2,500	17	94.1	70.5	82.3	76.4	100.0	100.0	94.1	70.5	70.5	94.1	70.5	17.6
1,501-2,000	24	95.8	83.3	83.3	66.6	100.0	100.0	91.6	62.5	70.8	75.0	75.0	4.2
1,001-1,500	55	96.3	74.5	92.7	70.9	98.1	96.3	89.1	74.5	78.1	89.1	56.5	5.4
501-1,000	99	87.8	43.4	67.6	84.8	90.9	84.8	51.5	35.3	52.5	59.5	31.3	3.0
1-500	128	78.1	16.4	47.6	86.7	70.3	79.7	21.1	11.7	26.5	20.3	10.9	2.3

is well supplied with this type of store.[4] Only a small proportion of the towns below 1,000 in population have jewelry stores, men's clothing stores, dry goods stores, and shoe stores. These stores are fairly common in towns varying in population from 1,000-2,500 and except in one instance exist in every town having a population of 2,500 or more. Grocery stores, that is, stores selling groceries only, exist in only 70 per cent of the towns having a population of less than 500. Nine-tenths of the towns in the 500-1,000 population group have them and they are present in all towns belonging to groups larger than 1,000. Hardware stores are found in 79 per cent of the towns in the 1-500 population group and in 84 per cent of the towns in the next larger group. Practically all towns larger than 1,000 have this service. General stores[5] occur in varying proportions in all groups of towns. When they are absent in a town, especially a large town, it is probable that the goods ordinarily sold by a general store are handled by specialty stores of various kinds. Women's clothing stores are not numerous in any group of towns. Millinery stores are more frequently found than women's clothing; a considerable portion of the towns above 1,000 in population have this type of store. Variety stores are found in only about half of the towns in the 1,000-1,500 population group. In towns larger than 1,500, they are more numerous but some towns, even those in the larger groups, do not have them. A variety store sells goods frequently handled by other types of stores, so the absence of a variety store in some larger towns may be due to the fact that its services are being offered by other kinds of establishments.

However, on the basis of figures in Table I, seemingly the smallest town in point of size that can ordinarily be expected to support any one of the various types of stores mentioned in the Table is as follows:

[4]It appeared upon investigation that towns in 2,001-2,500 group not having furniture stores were located relatively near a larger town having furniture stores that delivered goods in the surrounding area.

[5]A general store is one which sells groceries, dry goods, and various other articles. It should not be confused with the highly organized department stores found in large towns and cities.

Type of Store	Population of Town
Drug stores	Approximately 500
Furniture stores	Approximately 1,000
General stores	No lower limit
Grocery stores	Approximately 500
Hardware stores	Approximately 500
Jewelry stores	Approximately 1,000
Women's clothing stores	Occur irregularly (in larger towns)
Dry Goods stores	Approximately 1,000
Shoe stores	Approximately 1,000
Variety stores	Approximately 1,500
Millinery stores	Approximately 1,000

Only three types of specialty stores, drug stores, grocery stores, and hardware stores, are likely to exist in a town having a population of less than 500. If farmers living near a town of this size wish to purchase articles sold by other types of specialty stores, they must take their chances in getting them at a general store or they are obliged to go to a larger town where specialty stores are found. A town having a population of 1,000 is much more adequately supplied with the various types of stores but it does not have a complete quota of them. A larger town is more desirable from the standpoint of variety of services which it offers.

SIZE OF TOWN AND OTHER TYPES OF SERVICES OFFERED

A trade center offers other types of services besides those included under merchandising. For purposes of convenience in this study, these services have been divided into four groups: namely: artisan services, professional services, recreational services, and miscellaneous services. The method for studying the relationship between size of town and these services is the same as that used for the merchandising list. Artisan services include service in which special skill is an important factor. Bakers, blacksmiths, dyers and cleaners, electricians, plumbers, and tailors are considered in this category. The percentage of towns in different population groups that have these services are given in Table II. Only 58.5 per cent of the towns in the 501-1,000 population group have bakeries, whereas 83.6 per cent of the towns in the next larger group have them. The percentage of towns in other groups having this service is high except for towns in the 2,001-2,500 group. Four towns in this group do not have a bakery. Apparently, in these particular towns which happen to be fairly near larger towns, bakery service is supplied satisfactorily from other trade centers. Approximately two-thirds of the towns in 1-500 population have blacksmiths, and 73.7 per cent of the towns in the next larger group have this service.[6]

Practically none of the small towns have dyers and cleaners and they occur irregularly in larger places. A wide deviation from the usual trend

[6]The low percentages of blacksmiths in some of the groups of larger towns are probably due to the fact that some establishments not listed as blacksmith shops offer this service.

Table II—Percentage of Towns in the Different Population Groups which have Various Kinds of Artisan Services.

Size of town	No. of towns in group	Type of service					
		Baker	Black-smith	Dyer and cleaner	Elec-trician	Plumber	Tailor
		Pct.	*Pct.*	*Pct.*	*Pct.*	*Pct.*	*Pct.*
4,501-5,000	5	100.0	100 0	80.0	60 0	80.0	100.0
4,001-4,500	6	100.0	83.3	33.3	50.0	100.0	100.0
3,501-4,000	5	100.0	100 0	40.0	40.0	100.0	100.0
3,001-3,500	6	100.0	100.0	16.7	33.3	83.3	100.0
2,501-3,000	8	87.5	62.5	50.0	62.5	87.5	87.5
2,001-2,500	17	76.4	94.1	29.4	11.7	70.5	82.3
1,501-2,000	24	95.8	79.1	41.6	33.3	75.0	66.7
1,001-1,500	55	83.6	70.9	9.0	16 3	67.2	52.7
501-1,000	99	58.5	73.7	4.0	13.1	38.3	19.1
1-500	128	21.1	66 4	1.5	7 0	8.6	5.4

occurs in the case of the six towns in the 3,001-3,500 group. According to the "Gazetteer" only one town has this service listed. Most of these towns are not far from larger towns or cities so the presumption is that dyeing and and cleaning establishments in these larger places extend their service to surrounding towns. Electricians are not found uniformly in any group of towns. There are plumbers in more than 70 per cent of the towns having a population of 1,500 or more but they are not so numerous in smaller towns. Tailors are listed in two-thirds of the towns in the 1,501-2,000 population group and in four-fifths or more of the towns belonging to the larger population groups. Barely half of the towns in the 1,001-1,500 group have tailors and they are almost entirely absent in towns below 1,000 in population.

The occurrence of professional services in towns of various sizes is given in Table III. Only slightly more than half of the towns in the 501-1,000 population group have dentists but 94.5 per cent of the towns in the 1,001-1,500 group have this service. Seemingly, according to the figures in this

Table III—Number and Percentage of Towns in Different Population Groups which have designated types of Professional Services

Size of town	No. of towns in group	Type of service					
		Dentist		Lawyer		Physician	
		No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
4,501-5,000	5	5	100.0	5	100.0	5	100.0
4,001-4,500	6	6	100.0	6	100.0	6	100.0
3,501-4,000	5	5	100.0	5	100.0	5	100.0
3,001-3,500	6	6	100 0	6	100.0	6	100 0
2,501-3,000	8	8	100.0	7	87.5	8	100.0
2,001-2,500	17	16	94 1	12	75.0	17	100.0
1,501-2,000	24	22	91.6	18	75.0	24	100.0
1,001-1,500	55	52	94.5	36	65.4	51	92.7
501-1,000	99	54	54.5	27	27.2	91	91.9
1-500	128	14	10 9	9	7.0	94	73.4

Table, a town having 1,000 people is necessary before the community can have a resident dentist. Lawyers are not found in towns of less than 1,000 in population to any significant extent. Physicians, on the other hand, are listed in 91.9 per cent of the towns in the 501-1,000 population group and in 73.4 per cent of the towns in the smallest group, that is, towns having a population of less than 500.

The only recreational services listed in the "Gazetteer" that were included in this study were pool and billiard halls, and motion picture theatres. The data for these are given in the following table.

Table IV—Number and Percentage of Towns in Different Population Groups which have designated Recreational Services.

Size of town	No. of towns in group	Type of service			
		Billiard hall		Motion pictures	
		No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
4,501-5,000	5	5	100.0	3	60.0
4,001-4,500	6	5	83.3	5	83.3
3,501-4,000	5	5	100.0	4	80.0
3,001-3,500	6	5	83.3	6	100.0
2,501-3,000	8	7	87.5	7	87.5
2,001-2,500	17	11	64.7	13	76.4
1,501-2,000	24	20	83.3	14	58.3
1,001-1,500	55	45	81.8	47	85.4
501-1,000	99	67	67.6	50	50.5
1-500	128	66	51.5	34	26.5

The pool and billiard hall finds support in half of the towns in the 1-500 population group and in 67 per cent of the towns in the next larger group. Motion picture theatres are operated in only one-fourth of the towns in the 1-500 population group, but exist in one-half of the towns varying in population from 501-1,000. Larger towns have this service, although it is not found regularly in all of them as reference to Table IV will show. Possibly the policy of people in different communities regarding these types of amusements has an influence on their presence in different towns.

Under miscellaneous services, banks, hospitals, florists, laundries, and newspapers are included; the numerical data for them are given in Table V. Banks exist in four-fifths of the towns in the 1-500 population group and in almost all the towns having a population of more than 500. Hospitals are not listed regularly in any group of towns and relatively few are found in the towns below 1,500 in population. Only a small proportion of the towns below 1,500 in population have florists. This service exists irregularly in larger towns. Laundries are listed in every town in the 4,501-5,000 population group but in smaller towns they are not regularly found. More than two-thirds of the towns having a population of less than 1,500 do not have this service. A town of 500 in population frequently does not have a newspaper, as only 36.7 per cent of the towns in the 1-500 population group have this service. However, a newspaper exists in 81.8 per cent of the towns having a population of 501-1,000 and towns above 1,000 in population are seldom without it.

It appears from the data given in Tables I to IV that many services are

Table V—Percentage of Towns in Different Population Groups which have Miscellaneous Services

Size of town	No. of towns in group	Type of service*				
		Bank	Florist	Hospital	Laundry	Local newspaper
		Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.
4,501-5,000	5	100.0	80.0	60.0	100.0	100.0
4,001-4,500	6	100.0	83.5	83.3	83.3	100.0
3,501-4,000	5	100.0	100.0	60.0	60.0	100.0
3,001-3,500	6	100.0	66.7	50.0	50.0	100.0
2,501-3,000	8	100.0	62.5	25.0	87.5	100.0
2,001-2,500	17	100.0	41.1	64.7	35.3	88.2
1,501-2,000	24	100.0	58.3	33.3	20.8	91.6
1,001-1,500	55	96.3	34.5	12.7	9.0	92.7
501-1,000	99	91.9	14.1	0	3.1	81.8
1-500	128	82.0	6.2	2.3	1.5	36.7

*Data for hospitals were secured from American Medical Directory, Published by American Medical Association, 1927 pp. 800-803.

not found in the smaller towns. Banks, general stores, drug stores, and hardware stores are the only ones which are found in more than three-fourths of the towns in the smallest group. A town with a population of 1,000 is much more complete from the standpoint of variety of services offered because in addition to having several types of stores it will be likely to have a bakery, a plumber, a doctor, a dentist, a newspaper, and possibly a tailor. Some services, of course, cannot exist even in a town having a population of 1,000 but have to locate in larger places.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION AND SIZE OF TOWN

The figures in the foregoing tables show some facts which are of considerable importance from the standpoint of community organization. Every town cannot have all types of stores and other kinds of services notwithstanding the fact that it may be desirable to have them. There must be enough people in a town and in the community around it to support a type of service before it can exist. Community leaders need to recognize this fact. Otherwise, organizations may try to keep a service in a town which is too small to support it. If they do this, confusion and disappointment are likely to result. The most fruitful field of endeavor for individuals and organizations in a community is to find out what services their community can have and then strive to make the services that are offered as perfect as they possibly can be. When a community does not have enough people to support a particular type of service, the most logical plan to follow is to cooperate with people in other communities to get the services that are needed.

The fact that trade centers are limited in the variety of services which they give has been recognized for a long time. Nevertheless, farmers and other people living in the trade area of a small town often have been urged to patronize it and thus be loyal to their local community. But, if this

nearby town is an incomplete service center, the people in the territory around it may be obliged to go to other towns in order to get articles or services that they want. The interests of people then tend to be divided among trade centers with the result that loyalty to the nearest trade center and its organizations is jeopardized. Community leaders need to be cognizant of this situation.

WHERE DO FARMERS TRADE

During the year 1926 several hundred farmers in Clinton, Eaton, Ingham, Livingston, and Shiawassee counties named, in a questionnaire, the town where they did their banking and where they generally purchased clothing, groceries, hardware, and furniture.[7] Thirteen hundred and fifty-one farmers gave this information about their trading habits in a complete manner, so their answers were studied in detail. The first point to be investigated was the number of trade centers that each of these farmers patronized. The results of this counting showed that 647 of the 1,351 farmers patronized one center only for banking and for the purchase of goods listed in the questionnaire. Four hundred and ninety-seven farmers patronized two trade centers; 172, three; 32, four; and three of the farmers patronized as many as five trade centers. (Table VI.) However, not all farmers living near a trade center of any size patronize it for all the services considered in this study.[8] The answers to the questionnaire show that even though farmers live in the trade area of a large town they frequently do their banking or

Table VI—Percentage of 1,351 Farmers Patronizing One or More Trade Centers for Banking, Clothing, Furniture, Groceries, Hardware.

Size of trade center	Total No. of Farmers	Number of trade centers patronized				
		One	Two	Three	Four	Five
		Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.
Over 5,000	338	55.0	29 9	11 8	3.3	0
4,001-4,500	95	57.9	31 6	9.5	1.1	0
3,001-3,500	64	62.5	26 6	10.9	0	0
2,501-3,000	84	64.3	21 4	11.9	1 2	1.2
2,001-2,500	36	69.4	25.0	5.6	0	0
1,501-2,000	113	69.0	23.0	7 9	0	0
1,001-1,500	132	40.9	46.2	10.6	2.3	0
501-1,000	161	38.5	49.7	9 9	1.8	0
1-500	328	28.4	47.2	19.8	3.9	6
Total	1,351	47.9	36 8	12.7	2.4	.2

[7]These questionnaires were secured by the Department of Sociology in connection with a research project on community organization. Teachers in the rural schools in the four counties cooperated in getting the questionnaires answered. A copy of the questionnaire is given in the appendix.

[8]The town that the farmer named most frequently as the center for banking, clothing, furniture, groceries, and hardware, was used as a basis for distributing the farmers among the trade centers of different sizes as given in Table VI.

purchase hardware and groceries in a small town near the farm. These facts are of considerable significance from the standpoint of community organization because they show that the trading interests of approximately one-half to two-thirds of the farmers are likely to be divided between two or more towns.

The figures given in Table VII indicate that a town which is a banking center for the farmer is likely to be the center also for groceries and hardware. The percentage columns show this fact. Clothing and furniture centers are not so closely associated with the banking, grocery, and hardware center because, as has been noted, clothing and furniture stores usually are not found in the smaller towns.

Table VII—Number and percentage of Farmers who patronize the same Trade Center in which they do their banking or buy other *commodities*, using each type of service as a base.

Type of service used as a base	Banking		Clothing		Furniture		Groceries		Hardware	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Banking	1351	100.0	882	65.3	933	69.1	1093	80.9	1170	86.6
Clothing	882	65.3	1351	100.0	1015	75.1	888	65.7	893	66.1
Furniture	933	69.1	1015	75.1	1351	100.0	891	65.9	928	68.7
Groceries	1093	80 9	888	65 7	891	65.9	1351	100.0	1126	83.0
Hardware	1170	86 6	893	66.1	928	68.7	1126	83.3	1351	100.0

Data in Table VIII show the size of town that these 1,351 farmers patronized for the various services listed in the table. It appears, judging by the data in the percentage columns, that clothing and furniture are purchased by a considerable number of the farmers in towns having a population of over 5,000.[9] Large towns are not favored so much for groceries and hardware purchase or for banking service.

There are no data at hand to show where farmers go for services other than banking and those classes of merchandise mentioned in the preceding paragraphs. Presumably, they will go to the nearest trade center if the service is available there, but the statistical proof of this point is lacking. However, the data in all the questionnaires returned in connection with this study of community organization were tabulated, to find out to what extent the

[9]The number of towns in different population groups that were named by the farmers in the five counties is as follows:

Size of town	Number of towns named
Over 5,000	4
5,000-4,501	0
4,500-4,001	0
4,000-3,501	1
3,500-3,001	1
3,000-2,501	2
2,500-2,001	1
2,000-1,501	2
1,500-1,001	6
1,000-501	8
500-1	19
Total	44

Table VIII—Number and percentage of 1,351 Farmers who purchase commodities and do their banking in trade centers of various sizes.

Kind of commodity	Size of trade center																	
	Over 5,000		4,001 to 4,500		3,001 to 3,500		2,501 to 3,000,		2,001 to 2,500		1,501 to 2,000		1,001 to 1,500		501 to 1,000		1 to 500	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Banking...	273	20.1	92	6.8	72	5.3	86	6.3	34	2.5	133	9.8	132	9.7	163	12.0	374	27.5
Clothing...	594	43.8	122	9.0	55	4.1	76	5.6	37	2.7	108	8.0	97	7.1	96	7.1	162	11.9
Furniture..	438	32.3	111	8.2	56	4.1	86	6.3	31	2.3	127	9.4	109	8.0	137	10.1	219	16.2
Groceries..	302	22.3	88	6.5	48	3.5	67	4.9	32	2.3	110	8.1	129	9.5	152	11.2	449	33.1
Hardware.	283	20.9	79	5.8	69	5.1	80	5.9	39	2.8	118	8 7	145	10.7	162	11.9	392	28.9

farmer's church, newspaper, telephone, and postoffice center correspond with his trade center. This phase of town-country relationships will be considered next.

THE TRADE CENTER[10] AND THE FARMER'S CHURCH, NEWSPAPER, POST OFFICE, TELEPHONE, AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Do farmers go to church at the place where they do their banking and purchase groceries, hardware, and other goods? According to the statements of 1,604 farmers in the five counties previously named, 874, 54.4 per cent of this number, do. (See Table IX.) Sixty-six and nine-tenths per cent get a newspaper and 73.3 per cent receive their mail from the town where they trade. Telephone service for 77.8 per cent of the farmers is located at their trade center, whereas only 62.2 per cent of the farmers generally go there for social affairs such as parties and picnics. Of the 499 farmers who indicated the place where their children attended high school, 380, 76.2 per cent, named their trade center. Thus it is evident that many activities and interests of farmers are located at the town where they do most of their trading. A ranking of services listed in Table IX according to the percentage which corresponds to the trade center gives the following result:

Service	Per cent corresponding to trade center
Telephone	78.8
Postoffice	73.3
Newspaper	66.9
Social Affairs	62.1
Church	54.4

The fact that church and social affairs are lowest in this list may indicate a preference on the part of farmers to mingle in their own groups for such

[10]The town that the farmer named most frequently as the place where he did his banking and purchased clothing, furniture and hardware, was considered as his trade center.

Table IX—Number and percentage of farmers whose center for church, newspaper, postoffice, telephone and social affairs is located at their trade center.

Size of town	No. of towns	No. of farmers	Church		Newspaper		Post office		Social affairs		Telephone	
			No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Over 5,000	4	377	134	35.4	349	92.2	236	62.4	207	54.7	242	63.9
5,000-4,501	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4,500-4,001	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4,000-3,501	1	106	30	28.3	105	99.1	92	86.8	26	24.5	88	83.0
3,500-3,001	1	74	24	32.4	53	71.6	46	62.2	42	56.7	58	78.4
3,000-2,501	2	102	56	54.9	88	86.3	76	74.5	59	57.8	86	84.3
2,500-2,001	1	42	21	50.0	33	78.6	37	88.1	24	57.1	26	61.9
2,000-1,501	2	124	83	66 9	108	87.1	101	81.4	91	73.4	111	89.5
1,500-1,001	6	164	81	49.4	120	73.2	139	84.7	95	57.9	127	77.4
1,000-501	8	201	125	62 2	128	63.7	155	77.1	120	59.7	164	81.6
500-1	19	414	320	77.3	89	21.5	295	71.2	333	80.4	362	87.4
Total	44	1604	874	54 5	1073	66.9	1177	73.4	997	62.1	1264	78.8

activities, or it may indicate that organizations in the town such as churches, clubs, etc., have not reached the people living in its trade area. The ideal condition is one where both town and country people work together in a harmonious manner in all matters essential to community improvement.

If farmers do not go to a town where they do most of their trading for a particular type of service, do they go to a larger or to a smaller place for it? The data for the 1,604 farmers considered in this part of the study furnish substantial evidence for an answer to this question. (See Tables X and XI.) Only 40 farmers went to church in a town larger than their trade center, whereas 706 went to smaller towns or to the open country.[11] In the case of newspapers, the trend is in the opposite direction, and necessarily so because some of the smaller towns do not have newspapers. Six hundred and thirty-seven farmers subscribed for newspapers published in

Table X—Number and percentage of farmers going to larger town than their trade center for designated services.

Size of town	No. of towns	No. of farmers	Church		Newspaper		Post office		Sociables		Telephone	
			No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Over 5,000	4	377	1	3	18	4.7	0	0	6	1.6	0	0
5,000-4,501	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4,500-4,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4,000-3,501	1	106	2	1.9	8	7 5	0	0	9	8.5	0	0
3,500-3,001	1	74	2	2.7	34	45.9	5	6.7	15	20.3	1	1.3
3,000-2,501	2	102	0	0	19	18.6	0	0	1	1.0	0	0
2,500-2,001	1	42	0	0	15	35.7	2	4.8	11	26.2	0	0
2,000-1,501	2	124	0	0	41	33 1	0	0	29	23.4	2	1.6
1,500-1,001	6	164	10	6.1	66	40.2	10	6.1	28	17.1	2	1.2
1,000-501	8	201	5	2.5	103	51.2	15	7.5	41	20.4	12	6.0
500-1	19	414	20	4.8	333	80.4	73	17.6	99	23.9	30	4.2
Total	44	1604	40	2.5	637	39.7	105	6.5	239	14.9	47	2.9

[11]A few farmers named two places as their church center, hence they were counted twice. Discussion relating to this is presented in the next paragraph.

Table XI—Number and percentage of farmers going to smaller towns than their trade center for designated services

Size of town	No. of towns	No. of farmers	Church		Newspaper		Post office		Sociables		Telephone	
			No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Over 5,000	4	377	243	64.2	51	13.5	141	37.2	250	66.1	136	35.9
5,000-4,501	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.. ..
4,500-4,001	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.. ..
4,000-3,501	1	106	75	70.7	4	3.8	14	13.2	92	86.8	19	17.9
3,500-3,001	1	74	48	64.9	4	5.4	23	31 1	49	66.2	15	20.3
3,000-2,501	2	102	47	46.1	14	13.7	26	25.5	55	53.9	16	15.7
2,500-2,001	1	42	21	50.0	3	7.1	3	7.1	21	50.0	16	38.1
2,000-1,501	2	124	41	33.1	2	1.6	23	18.5	45	36.3	12	9.7
1,500-1,001	6	164	83	50.6	11	6.7	15	9.1	79	48.2	37	22.6
1,000-501	8	201	72	35.8	4	2.0	32	15.9	89	44.3	30	14.9
500-1	19	414	76	18.3	8	1.9	48	11.6	96	23.2	25	6 0
Total	44	1604	706	44.4	101	6.3	325	20.3	776	48.4	306	19 1

towns larger than the town where they did most of their trading. Only 101 received this service from smaller towns. The farmer's postoffice and telephone, as has been pointed out, are usually located at the point where he does most of his trading. If they are not located there, these services more frequently come from a smaller rather than a larger town. Judging by the data in Tables X and XI, the small towns are preferred by farmers as a place where social affairs are held.

Not only do farmers receive services from towns other than the place where they usually trade but some indicate that they go to more than one place for certain services. In the following table, the number of places from which these 1,604 farmers received services mentioned in the preceding paragraphs is given.

It is evident from data in Table XII that farmers usually have one center for their church, postoffice, and telephone. Two hundred and sixty-one farmers (16.3 per cent) get newspapers from two or more towns. Social affairs, parties and picnics, are attended at several places apparently, as many farmers mention two or more towns as centers for this kind of activity.

The data presented up to this point in the study permit some general conclusions to be made. All farmers do not have a definite center from

Table XII—Number of towns from which 1,604 farmers receive designated services.

Type of service	Number of towns									
	One		Two		Three		Four		Five	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Church	1599	99.7	5	.3	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Newspaper	1343	83.7	236	14.7	21	1.3	4	.2	.....	.....
Post office	1603	99.9	1	.1	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Social affairs	1125	70.1	325	20 3	128	8.0	23	1.4	3	.2
Telephone	1592	99.2	12	.7	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

which they may receive or get all kinds of services. On the other hand, the data do show that most farmers have a definite center for a definite service. Every farmer, practically speaking, has a banking center, a hardware center, a clothing center, and a church center, but these centers may not be, and frequently are not, at one town.

Tables I to V show, in a quantitative way, the relationship between number of people and type of service. These data indicate that it is important from the standpoint of an individual enterprise and for the community to find out how many people are necessary to maintain a service on an efficient basis. This relationship is more easily ascertained in the case of services that involve an exchange of money. They are standardized to a certain extent. Services that involve primarily an exchange of intellectual and social values are not so standardized, although the relationship between numbers of people and services of this type can be fairly well discerned in some cases. It has been estimated on the basis of carefully collected data that a good high school can be maintained in an area where there are on the average 1,250 people.[12] Presumably an area having less than this number of people would have difficulty in maintaining a high school.[13] Some investigators have regarded 1,000 people per church as a norm, though their data show that, as yet, a majority of counties that they studied have more churches than this norm would require.[14]

Such relationships need to be worked out for other types of services. Perhaps the future history in rural life will show that rural people are desirous of having many of the advantages enjoyed by urban people but that they do not know how to organize their efforts to get them. Some services will require the cooperation of people in one town and the farmers living near it. Others will require the cooperation of two or more towns and the farmers living in the territory around them. A certain number of services may require the cooperation of all the towns and rural people in a whole county or even a larger area. Library service can now be handled most effectively on a county basis with branch libraries in the various towns to supplement the service of the main library. Seemingly, according to the data in Table V, it requires a town having a population of at least 1,500 in addition to the people living in the rural area around it to support a hospital. But there is no certainty that every town even of this size can support a hospital adequately unless part of its support can be secured from other towns and communities. It has been estimated that 5,000 to 6,000 people are needed to support a 25 or 30 bed hospital and that if the hospital is smaller certain administrative difficulties arise.[15] Evidently community organization projects in the future will need to include not only intra-community cooperation but inter-community cooperation as well.

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[12]Service Institutions for Town and Country, Research Bulletin No. 66. Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station.

[13]This relationship between number of people and type of service is recognized indirectly in the school laws of Michigan. The act providing for the establishment of rural agricultural high schools provides that a proposed district must have a total assessed valuation of at least one million dollars, or a total area of not less than twenty-four government sections of land. (See General School Laws of Michigan, Section 568, page 239.)

[14]The data are drawn from 179 counties in different parts of the United States, see Morse and DeS. Brunner—The Town and Country Church in the United States, Doran & Co., 1923, page 73.

[15]Service Institutions for Town and Country, Research Bulletin No. 66, Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station.

THE FUTURE OF THE SMALL TOWN

These considerations indicate that the small town has certain limitations but they do not portend that the small town will cease to exist or to play an important role in rural life. Some towns possibly will pass away, chiefly because they cannot compete with other towns nearby. But there is opportunity and necessity for a town of 500 to 1,000 in population to offer certain types of goods and services which are regularly demanded by the people living near it. These services have been pointed out in a preceding part of this bulletin.[16] A careful count of the number of incorporated towns in Michigan, having a population of less than 2,500 that lost a given type of service during the period 1917 to 1927 revealed the fact that a town very seldom lost a type of service when it was large enough to support it.[17] There was a decrease in the number of towns of all sizes having millinery stores. General stores decreased in all groups of towns except those in the smallest group. These decreases may be explained in part by the fact that other types of stores sold goods handled by millinery stores and general stores. All types of service except general stores, pool and billiard halls, blacksmiths, and motion pictures had disappeared in one or more towns below 500 in population.[18] Also, several towns in the 500-1,000 population group lost dry goods stores, jewelry stores, men's clothing stores, and dentists. On the other hand, very few towns above 500 in population lost drug stores, grocery stores, banks, physicians, and certain other services during the ten-year period. The figures that support the foregoing statements are given in table XIII.

The small town furnishes a market for farm produce. Nearly all towns in farming districts have grain elevators, creameries, and shipping facilities. Such services are necessary for the farming business and will undoubtedly remain wherever the volume of business is great enough to support them. The objections to the town as a trading center for farmers arises when it tries to offer a service that can be given more satisfactorily in a larger town. The relationship between a large and small town needs to be supplementary rather than competitive.

There has been much discussion about the small town in recent years. Some confusion exists in the minds of people concerning its desirability as a place to live and as a center for the farmer's church and school. Much of this confusion arises because people do not differentiate between the economic and social possibilities of the town. Its economic possibilities and limitations have been noted, but these limitations do not necessarily imply social limitations. There is no evidence at hand to show that the small town cannot be a desirable center for rural social institutions and a desirable place in which to live. People in many small towns are making their town an important factor in community development and social progress. Civic improvements of various kinds are being made and community development projects are encouraged.[19]

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[16]See page 6.

[17]The classified list of businesses for the different towns in the Gazetteers for 1917 and 1927 were used to determine whether a town lost a type of service during the decade.

[18]Probably laundries and tailors did not exist in towns of this size in 1917 hence there could be no decrease in number of towns having these services.

[19]United States Department of Agriculture, bulletins number 1388, 1485, 1192, and 1274 give examples of activities of this kind.

Table XIII—Number of towns having a population of less than 2,500 that lost designated types of service in the period 1917 to 1927.

Size of town	1-500	501-1,000	1,001-1,500	1,501-2,000	2,001-2,500	Total No. of towns
Total number of towns in group	128	99	55	24	17	323
Type of service—stores:						
Dry goods	11	15	0	1	0	27
Drug	8	3	2	0	1	14
Furniture	3	4	0	0	1	8
General	0	5	14	4	3	26
Grocery	1	0	0	0	0	1
Hardware	6	6	2	0	0	14
Jewelry	11	17	1	0	1	30
Men's clothing	10	16	2	3	1	32
Shoe	5	0	0	1	1	7
Variety	9	2	0	0	1	12
Millinery	27	25	5	5	4	66
Other services:						
Bakery	10	5	0	0	0	15
Bank	7	2	2	0	0	11
Billiard and pool halls	0	0	0	0	3	3
Blacksmith	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dentist	12	14	0	0	2	28
Laundry	0	5	11	9	2	27
Motion picture	0	6	0	3	2	11
Newspaper	24	8	1	0	0	33
Physician	20	3	3	0	0	26
Tailor	0	8	4	3	1	16

INTERLOCKING THE INTERESTS OF TOWN AND COUNTRY

Such complicated trade relations as have been described in this bulletin frequently lead to misunderstandings between merchants and farmers. When misunderstandings exist, prejudices and suspicions are likely to arise, and, thus, cooperation between town and country cannot be easily achieved. Many differences between farmers and town people may be traced to the environmental conditions under which each group lives and works. For instance, the problems that merchants must solve are not easily understood by the average farmer who judges the services of a merchant and his store very largely by its objective manifestations. But the objective features of merchandising will not be likely to disclose the most perplexing problems which arise in the merchandising business. Similarly, the merchant often fails to understand and evaluate the problems that farmers have. Merchandising and farming, as occupations, are quite different and in some ways are antagonistic to each other. Yet, both merchants and farmers are interested, or should be interested, in improving their community.

In community improvement, group organization and interest must be secured and friendly contacts developed. One individual, no matter how capable he may be, can work more effectively if he secures the support of his fellow-merchants or farmers. A few merchants who are unwilling to cooperate with the rest can tear down almost as much as the progressive merchants build up. In the same way, a few non-cooperative farmers may do much harm in opposing cooperative action between town and country.

In order to find out how frequently there are organizations in Michigan communities representing group effort which might be expected to interlock the interests of town and country, a questionnaire was sent to one or more merchants in a number of representative towns, selected as a random sample from all towns in the state. A total of 209 replies were received, distributed among the towns of different size as shown in the following table:

Table XIV—Number and percentage of towns having organizations.

Population group	No. of towns from which data were secured	No. having organizations	Per cent having organizations
0-500	106	11	10.6
501-1,000	52	24	44.0
1,001-1,500	31	19	61.0
1,501-2,000	13	10	76.9
2,001-2,500	7	4	57.1
Total	209	68	32.4

It is evident from these figures that there is much need for either new or existing organizations in this state to encourage friendly activities between town and country. In the case of 106 towns having a population of approximately 500, a marked degree of association existed between the presence of an active organization and projects that were intended to promote community development. Community fairs, and farmers and merchants' picnics were more frequently held in towns which had a merchants' organization of some kind than in communities where such an organization was not present.

In the case of the 68 organizations in this state for which data were secured, only 16 had farmer members and only five had officers or directors who were farmers. Seven had meetings, such as banquets, luncheons, and general programs, with farmers at frequent intervals. Sixty-two of the 68 had occasional meetings of one kind or another with farmers, and 49 had a farmers' and merchants' picnic. All of these activities are desirable, but they are ineffective if given in a patronizing way or as a condescending favor. Community development can be secured only when there is a wholehearted cooperation between both groups.

There are many activities and interests which are community-wide in their scope that may be utilized in promoting harmony between town and country. In the 209 Michigan communities, band concerts and chautauquas were mentioned 56 times; farmers and merchants' picnics 49 times; promoting boys' and girls' clubs 34 times; community fairs 25 times, and shows and exhibits other than community fairs 14 times. These figures are interesting for they suggest the frequency of occurrence for the different activities. However, communities, like individuals, differ. No two are exactly alike. An activity which may succeed in one town may prove to be a failure in another place where other circumstances exist. There are, nevertheless, certain fundamental planes of interest that are present in every community and these may be stressed with a fair degree of safety. Matters relating to agricultural improvement, health, child welfare, and educational projects of all kinds are

helpful. One rural merchant writes when discussing town and country relationships, "To sit around the table with farmers and sing songs and have a good time brings town and country nearer together. I think these meetings are the most helpful ones we have had."

Under certain conditions civic improvement projects can be used advantageously. Community center buildings, community hospitals, and community libraries are examples of interest of this type.[20].

In promoting a harmony of interests between town and country, there is danger of over-emphasizing activities which give immediate, though temporary results. Activities of this kind may help to arouse interest but they do not sustain it over a long period of time. On the other hand, there are activities that, although their effects are not so immediately noticeable, foster a permanent and constructive interest in community development. It is probable that most effective results can be secured if a fair proportion of each type of activity is sponsored in a community. While it is impossible to make an arbitrary classification of community development activities into these two types, the following grouping suggests in a general way activities which have short-time results and those which have long-time results in any program of community development:

Activities which have short-time results	Activities which have long-time results
Band Concerts	Community Fairs
Bargain Days	Boys' and Girls Club Work
Free Motion Pictures	Civic Improvements
Trading Stamps	Educational Events
Gifts of Various Kinds	Home Talent Plays
Picnics	Agricultural and Commercial Development

Finally, it needs to be remembered that a rural trade center is essentially a service station for the community. Farmers need a town or towns where a variety of services necessary to meet the demands of a progressive farm population can be secured. Beyond this point the farmer's interest in further development of the town becomes more or less indirect. The problem of the rural town, as stated in the beginning, is to find out how it can best serve the people who patronize it.

SUMMARY

Only three types of specialty stores: drug stores, grocery stores, and hardware stores are apt to exist in a town having a population of less than 500.

A town having a population of 1,000 is much more complete from the standpoint of variety of services offered but some services which cannot exist in a town of this size have to locate in larger places.

A majority of the 1,352 farmers considered in this study patronized two

[20]Several communities in Michigan have purchased fire trucks which are used in both town and country.

or more trade centers. A considerable number purchased clothing and furniture in towns having a population of over 5,000. Large towns were not favored so much for grocery and hardware purchases or for banking service.

The center for church, newspaper, postoffice, telephone, and social affairs of a majority of farmers considered in this study is located at their trade center.

Although the small town is limited in the variety of services that can exist in it, certain ones regularly demanded by people living near the town may be offered in an advantageous manner.

There is need for cooperation between town and country in community improvement.

APPENDIX

Questionnaire Used in the Study of Community Organization

1. By what name is the country neighborhood called in which you live? (We do not mean the name of the near-by city or village, or even necessarily, though it may be, the same name as your township or school district; but we do mean the name of the open country locality or neighborhood in which your home is located. Some such names in the county are: Meadville, Vantown and Belle Oak.) Please read the questions over once more, and then write the name of your neighborhood here ....
If there is no such name, write "No name for this locality" on the above line.

2. If you have children in high school, where do they attend? ....

3. Where do you go for farm organization meetings, such as Farm Bureau .... Grange .... Farmers' Clubs .... Cooperative Associations ....

4. Where do you go for social affairs, such as parties, sociables, picnics, etc.? ....

5. In what town do you do most of your banking? ....

6 In what town do you buy most of your hardware? ...., furniture ...., groceries ...., general merchandise ...., clothing ....

7. In what town do you sell most of your cream .... milk ...., butter ...., eggs .... fruits ...., vegetables ...., small grains ....

8. From what town do you get your local newspaper? ....

9. To how many families within a distance of five miles are you or your family related by blood or marriage as near or nearer than second cousins? ....

10 What church do you attend? ...., Where located? ....

11. Name of head of family ...., Postoffice address, town ...., R. F. D. .... Home is located in Section No. .... Name of Township .... District School Number .... Location of Telephone Exchange ....

12. Do you desire a free copy of the published results of this information? ....